



2023 Christmas Tour of
Historic Frankfort Churches

December 8, 2023



FRANKLIN COUNTY TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

In collaboration with the historic churches of Frankfort, we eagerly welcome you to our Christmas open house. You are welcome to tour these treasured historic structures and enjoy three musical performances. All participating churches are open for viewing from 5:00-8:00pm with musical performances at the times below. Please tour at your own pace and attend any performance.

TOUR MUSICAL PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

The following churches are open for tour from 5:00-8:00pm

First Christian Church - 316 Ann Street, Frankfort, KY
-Musical Performance 5:15pm

First United Methodist Church - 211 Washington St. Frankfort, KY
-Musical Performance 6:00pm

First Presbyterian Church - 416 W Main Street, Frankfort, KY
-Presentation of Church History 6:40pm

Church of the Ascension -311 Washington Street, Frankfort, Ky
-Musical Performance 7:15pm

***First Baptist Church on St. Clair has provided a bus shuttle between churches this evening for your convenience.**

First Christian Church

316 Ann Street

Musical Performance 5:15pm

First Christian Church was founded on December 2, 1832, when seven people joined together with Elder John T. Johnson and Elder Philip Fall in the County Court House then located on the Capital grounds.

For several years, the congregation met at the old Court House; then at the homes of members, moving benches from house to house. Plans for a meeting house began in 1841 and a lot on Ann Street was purchased. The building was dedicated in May of 1842.

The church prospered until October 3, 1870, when a fire broke out on Broadway and continued up Ann Street, destroying the church building. A depressed economy in Frankfort left church members despairing if funds could be raised to rebuild. In stepped Emily Tubman. As her gift to the congregation, she had the present sanctuary built and furnished. The building was dedicated on May 11, 1872.

Fire struck First Christian Church again on December 21, 1958, with heavy damage to a large portion of the building. By April of 1960 the damaged section and building expansion was finished and dedicated.

Additions and renovations have continued through the years, with the addition of the Chenault Christian Life Center and the New Horizons Child Development Center. First Christian Church continues to be a church with a rich history and a vibrant future!

This evening's musical performance is entitled "Christmas Medley" presented by the Disciples Ringers with Director Lee Cowherd.

Please join us at 5:15pm



First United Methodist Church

211 Washington Street

Musical Performance 6:00 pm

Bishop Francis Asbury organized the first Methodist conference in May 1790 at Masterson Station near Lexington. Methodists who were already meeting in homes in Frankfort were assigned a circuit riding minister. When Asbury visited Frankfort in October 1810 he noted in his journal, "came to lowly seated Frankfort. Here are elegant accommodations provided for those who make the laws and those who break them, but there is no house of God."

In 1812 the legislature ordered a lottery for the purpose of building a house of worship. The church was built in the southwest corner of land where the Old Capitol is now located. It was shared by Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians. By 1823 the Methodists had left that location and built their own church on Ann Street. It was later torn down and a larger one built but burnt 1854. Land was purchased on Washington Street in 1856. This land was the livery for the Mansion House, a noted tavern where the McClure building is now located. The sanctuary was completed in 1858. In 1886 Jacob Swigert gave money to build the church's stone facade and steeple. A church parsonage was built in 1890 to the left of the sanctuary. It is presently used as a youth building.

Through numerous renovations, the interior walls, windows, and chancel area remained the same. The Dyer pipe organ was installed in 1992. With 39 ranks of nearly 2000 pipes it is the largest instrument in Frankfort. The adjacent Wesley Center was built in 2007. Classrooms, a contemporary worship center which doubles as a dining area, a gym and Gallery Hall where changing art exhibits are displayed are all included in this building.

The witness of this church is found locally in the support of numerous mission projects. It is extended throughout the world through the United Methodist Committee on Relief. The church provides significant support to missionaries in Thailand and medical mission in Honduras.

This evening's musical performance will be presented by Roy Nance, 45 year organist at the church with a recital of Christmas music from France, Germany, England and the United States.

Please join us at 6:00 pm



First Presbyterian Church

416 West Main Street

History Presentation 6:40 pm

In 1773, the McAfee brothers from Virginia crossed the Kentucky River and brought a Presbyterian presence to the site that was to become the town of Frankfort. Although Presbyterian churches were established in the outlying areas as early as 1795, it was not until 1815 that the First Presbyterian Church of Frankfort was organized.

Earlier, in 1810, and in conjunction with a private boys' school, the establishment of the first "Sabbath school" west of the Allegheny Mountains is credited to Margaretta Mason Brown, daughter of a Presbyterian minister and wife of the Honorable John Brown. In 1819, Mrs. Brown organized a "Sabbath school" for girls and the classes were often held in the garden of Mrs. Brown's home, "Liberty Hall," a well-known Frankfort landmark.

The original First Presbyterian Church, also the first denominational church building in Frankfort, was built on Wapping Street in 1824. Out growing this building, the property was sold to members of the Catholic community in the 1840's. A new building at 416 West Main Street was constructed and the congregation moved into the new church in 1849.

In 1914, the S. French Hoge Memorial Chapel was built; and remodeled in 1954. During the years 1936 to 1940, a completed renovation of the sanctuary building took place and in 1954, the church garden was dedicated. Estate funds left to the church by W. Pruett Graham were used to construct the Christian Education Building and the cloister which joins it to the sanctuary building in 1958-1959 which serves as a home to Weekday Community Preschool.

In 1999, the church undertook major repairs to the massive Norman Tower, a landmark component of the church. This major undertaking founded the church's intension to remain present as a downtown church. Ten years later, the Christian Education Building underwent remodeling and was rededicated in 2009.

First Presbyterian Church has continually been a special presence in the life of this community and celebrated their 200th year in 2015.



First Presbyterian Church will be open for tour with organ music programmed by Gary Johnson, Music Director. A brief history of the congregation will be presented at 6:40pm with refreshments in the social hall. Please join us.

Church of the Ascension

311 Washington Street

Musical Performance 7:15pm

In 1836 the Rt. Rev. Benjamin Bosworth, first Bishop of Kentucky received a gift/loan from the Church of the Ascension, Canal Street, New York City. This gift was to be used to establish an Episcopal Church in Kentucky. The gift came with a caveat that the new church was to also be called Church of the Ascension. The first church services were held on this site in 1836, in a portion of a law office. The current building built in the gothic revival style began construction in 1848 and was finished in 1852. In 1868 the apse and transept were added to the structure. A parish house was constructed in 1899 and an education wing in 1967. The original wood frame church remained on the grounds used for Sunday school classes until it was raised in 1900 and was located on the location of the adjacent parking lot. In 2016 the new steeple was installed recreating the one previously lost.

The parish members of Ascension established the first free school for the poor, and the church furnished a home for orphans from 1859 through 1939. Ascension continues to work for those less fortunate by providing a hot breakfast each Sunday morning and are in partnership with First Christian Church providing food items to all in the form of the blessing box located on the front lawn of the church grounds. The beauty of the church is enhanced by the beautiful stained-glass windows in the sanctuary and Parish Hall, and our beautiful garden that provides a quiet place to enter, rest and pray.



**Church of the Ascension
will give a musical
performance presented at
7:15pm. Please join us.**

FRANKLIN COUNTY TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Thank you for joining our inaugural Christmas tour of Frankfort's historic churches.

The mission of the Franklin County Trust for Historic Preservation is to preserve, promote and revitalize the historic resources of Frankfort and Franklin County. Established on November 27, 1974, the Trust is a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable member supported organization, chartered by the state of Kentucky and managed by a volunteer board of directors.

Over the years, we have successfully advocated for and preserved historic places across Franklin County beginning with the Glen Willis House (ca. 1815) in 1975. Other successes include the Sullivan Log House (ca. 1810) relocated to Fort Hill, the c 1929 Masons Grocery on Murray Street, the First Corenthian Missionary Baptist Church parsonage relocated to Second Street, and contributed to projects including, the War Mothers Memorial Bridge, the Old State Capitol Fountain, and the Green Hill Cemetery: African American Civil War Soldiers Military Monument, among many more.

Continuing a tradition of service and advocacy, we host an annual membership meeting, publish newsletters, provide educational programming, award preservation grants and awards, promote the best opportunities for preserving historic properties, and advocate for preservation of our county's historic places.

We will celebrate our 50th Anniversary in 2024 and we invite you to join us in the important work of preserving our shared heritage.



Please visit our website to learn more about our work at www.fcthp.org



Join us as we celebrate our 50th anniversary in 2024. Become a member today.

www.fcthp.org